

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W  
-----121220Z 022579 /11

O 121042Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4864  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION USUN  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 TEL AVIV 1073

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PORG, IS  
SUBJECT: GENEVA CONFERENCE - WALDHEIM'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

REF: TEL AVIV 1701 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: WALDHEIM WAS IN ISRAEL FEBRUARY 10 TO REPORT ON HIS TALKS WITH ARAB LEADERS AND TO OBTAIN ISRAEL'S VIEWS ON RESUMED ARAB/ISRAEL NEGOTIATIONS. THE THRUST OF HIS MESSAGE FROM THE ARABS WAS THAT THE TIME IS RIGHT TO RE-CONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, THAT A MORE MODERATE PLO IS NOW READY TO ACCEPT THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL, IF NOT FULL RECOGNITION, IN EXCHANGE FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE, AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE INVITED TO THE CONFERENCE. RABIN SAID THAT ISRAEL WAS PREPARED TO GO TO GENEVA BUT ONLY ON BASIS OF THE ORIGINAL 1973 CONFERENCE. IT IS ADMANTLY OPPOSED TO BOTH A PALESTINIAN STATE AND TO PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM.

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EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE, I.E., PEACE, RATHER THAN THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. IF THE ARABS WANT TO CHANGE THE TERMS OF THE CONFERENCE, THEY WILL HAVE TO BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT NOT BEING RECONVENED. WALDHEIM REPLIED THAT ON THE BASIS OF HIS DISCUSSIONS IN ARAB CAPITALS AND HERE, HE DOES NOT SEE HOW THE PROCEDURAL GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES,

PARTICULARLY THE ISSUE OF PLO PARTICIPATION, CAN BE BRIDGED. HOWEVER, CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE CONTINUED TO AVOID HAVING THE EFFORT TO RECONVENE GENEVA DIE OUT, AND HE HOPES THAT SECRETARY VANCE CAN CONTINUE THIS PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. DETAILS OF WALDHEIM'S TALKS WITH ISRAELI MINISTERS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY EVRON (MFA). SPEAKING FROM MEMCONS, HE SAID THAT WHILE URQUHART WOULD BE BRIEFING THE DEPARTMENT, HE WANTED US TO HAVE A FULL ACCOUNT FROM GOI. THE FIRST SESSION WAS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, WITH DEFENSE MINISTER PERES AND OTHER OFFICIALS SITTING IN. PRIME MINISTER RABIN CHAIRED THE SECOND MEETING, WITH ALLON AND PERES ALSO PRESENT.

3. AT THE FIRST MEETING, ALLON LED OFF BY STATING THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WITH WALDHEIM SHOULD BE CONDUCTED ON THE SAME BASIS AS THOSE IN GENEVA, THAT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SC RESOLUTION 338. HE SAID THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT RECOGNIZE OR ACCEPT GA RESOLUTIONS 31-61 OR 31-62. HE THEN EXPLAINED WHY ISRAEL OBJECTED TO THESE RESOLUTIONS AND WHY ISRAEL HAD PROTESTED TO THE EC COUNTRIES FOR SUPPORTING THEM. ALLON, NEVERTHELESS, MADE CLEAR THAT ISRAEL'S CRITICISM WAS DIRECTED TOWARD THE UN ORGANIZATION AND WAS NOT A PERSONAL ATTACK ON WALDHEIM HIMSELF.

4. WALDHEIM REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED THE LAST POINT, BUT HAD BEEN DISTRESSED BY THE ISRAELI PRESS TREATMENT OF HIS VISIT, PARTICULARLY THE ACCUSATION THAT HE

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SUPPORTED THE PLO POSITION. HOWEVER, OBVIOUSLY THERE IS THE NEED TO DISCUSS HOW TO GET NEGOTIATIONS STARTED AGAIN. HE SAW TWO ASPECTS THAT NEEDED CLARIFICATION. THE FIRST CONCERNED PROCEDURE AND HE HAD HEARD SEVERAL PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE ARABS CONCERNING DATES, PARTICIPATION AND AGENDA. HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE APPARENT CLOSE COORDINATION AMONG THE ARABS. THE ONLY SPECIFIC DATE PROPOSED, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN BY FAHMY, WHO THOUGHT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE RECONVENED IN MARCH. ASSAD PROPOSED A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION. SADAT WAS COOL TO THE IDEA, AND HUSSEIN WOULD ONLY SAY THAT IT WAS A POSSIBILITY. WALDHEIM THEN DESCRIBED FOR THE ISRAELIS THE SOVIETS' TWO-STAGE PROPOSAL, PROVIDING FOR A FORMAL STAGE FOLLOWED BY A SUBSTANTIVE STAGE.

5. ON SUBSTANCE, THE ARABS STATE FLATLY THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO DEAL WITH THE ELEMENTS OF THE CONFLICT. WALDHEIM SAID THAT HIS IMPRESSION WAS THAT IF A SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND FOR THE PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION

QUESTION, THIS WOULD HAVE A VERY POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE NEGOTIATING STAGE. IN HIS DISCUSSIONS HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE HARD LINE OF THE EGYPTIANS. THEY WERE MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVE THAN THE OTHERS, PARTICULARLY FAHMY. SADAT TOOK A MORE MODERATE LINE, AT LEAST ON PROCEDURAL MATTERS.

6. THE ARABS CLAIM THAT THE WAR IN LEBANON AND ITS OUTCOME HAD RESULTED IN A MORE MODERATE PLO, WHICH TODAY WOULD ACCEPT A THIRD SMALL STATE IN PALESTINE. HOWEVER, CREATION OF SUCH A STATE WOULD NOT MEAN IMMEDIATE RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL AND FULL PEACE. THAT WOULD COME LATER WALDHEIM SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND GENERAL ARAB SUPPORT FOR THIS APPRECIATION OF PLO THINKING.

7. WALDHEIM SAID THAT ARAFAT HAD TOLD HIM IN THEIR MEETING THAT THE PLO WANTS AN INDEPENDENT STATE.

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THE PLO IS INTERESTED IN PEACE AND DOES NOT SEEK THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL. ARAFAT INSISTED THAT THE PLO MUST RECEIVE AN INVITATION TO GENEVA ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND HE THOUGHT THAT THE ARAB STATES WOULD SUPPORT THIS DEMAND. ARAFAT STATED

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CATEGORICALLY THAT THE PLO DOES NOT ACCEPT RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. WHEN ASKED THE POSSIBILITY OF A UNITED ARAB DELEGATION, ARAFAT REPLIED THAT THIS WAS REALLY A MATTER FOR THE ARAB COUNTRIES TO DECIDE.

8. WHILE ARAFAT INSISTED ON RECEIVING AN INVITATION TO THE CONFERENCE, HE WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR ON WHETHER THE PLO WOULD ACTUALLY ATTEND. WALDHEIM SAID THAT IN HIS EARLIER MEETING IN GENEVA WITH DHADDUMI, HE HAD SAID THAT IF THE PALESTINIANS WERE ASSURED OF A SEPARATE STATE OF THEIR OWN, THEN THEIR PRESENCE WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY AT THE CONFERENCE. DHADDUMI SAID THAT THE PLO WOULD NEVERTHELESS INSIST ON AN INVITATION, EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY LATER DECIDE NOT TO ATTEND.

9. WALDHEIM STRESSED THAT ALL OF THE ARABS HAD POINTED TO RECENT SIGNS OF PLO MODERATION. THE SAUDIS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IF THERE IS NOT EARLY MOVEMENT, THE PLO  
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WOULD TURN BACK TOWARD EXTREMISM. THE SAUDIS AND THE JORDANIANS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN EGYPT. WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE ARABS ARE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR SKEPTICISM OF ISRAELI INTEREST IN RETURNING TO GENEVA. THE EGYPTIANS SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR DOUBTS ON THIS SCORE THEY WERE PREPARED TO CALL FOR A MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, IF THERE IS NO EARLY RESUMPTION, AND TO ASK IT TO ESTABLISH WORKING GROUPS TO FORMULATE ELEMENTS OF A SOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT. SARKIS TOLD WALDHEIM THAT LEBANON WAS NOT INTERESTED IN CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL. IT SIMPLY WANTED AN END TO THE ARAB/ISRAEL CONFLICT AND TO MAINTAIN ITS OWN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. HE EXPRESSED SURPRISE OVER THE ISRAELI REACTION TO THE 400 SYRIANS WHO HAD BEEN SENT TO NABATIYA TO PROTECT THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGES IN THE AREA.

10. IN RESPONSE, ALLON SAID THAT THE LEBANESE COULD REST ASSURED THAT ISRAEL WANTED PEACEFUL RELATIONS AND CERTAINLY HAD NO DESIGNS ON ITS TERRITORY. AS FOR THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, HE WISHED TO STRESS THAT ISRAEL WAS READY TO RETURN AT ANY TIME, EVEN BEFORE THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE CLEAR THAT THE PEACE CONFERENCE BEING TALKED ABOUT IS THE ONE THEY ALL AGREED TO IN 1973. HE THEN READ ALOUD WALDHEIM'S REMARKS AT

THE OPENING SESSION ON DECEMBER 22, 1973. THE SAME CONDITIONS APPLY TODAY. ISRAEL REJECTS COMPLETELY THE IDEA THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO HAVE ONE SESSION TO WIND UP THE CURRENT SESSION. ISRAEL LOOKS ON THE CONFERENCE AS CONTINUING, ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE BREAKS FROM TIME TO TIME. WITH REGARD TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL, IF IT SHOULD TAKE ON THE FUNCTION OF A PEACE CONFERENCE AND TRY TO LAY DOWN TERMS OF A SETTLEMENT, ISRAEL MAY NOT PARTICIPATE. ISRAEL REJECTED THE IDEA OF A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION AND WISHED TO NEGOTIATE SEPARATELY WITH EACH OF ITS NEIGHBORS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE SHOULD  
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BE RESOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN.

11. ISRAEL, ALLON SAID, IS INTERESTED IN AN OVERALL AGREEMENT. IF THAT IS NOT OBTAINABLE, THEN ISRAEL AGREES WITH THE UNITED STATES THAT THE ARABS SHOULD BE OFFERED A LESSER AGREEMENT, E.G., AN END TO THE STATE OF WAR. IN FACT THERE HAD STILL BEEN NO OFFICIAL REPLY FROM THE ARABS TO THE EARLIER OFFER REGARDING THE LATTER. ISRAEL COULD NOT ACCEPT PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM. HE DID NOT AGREE WITH THOSE WHO ATTRIBUTE ANY MODERATION TO THE PLO. THE PLO STILL ADHERES TO THE PALESTINE COVENANT, WHICH IS A MODERATE VERSION OF "MEIN KAMPF". NEVERTHELESS, ISRAEL WOULD NOT OBJECT IF WEST BANK PALESTINIANS WERE INCLUDED IN THE JORDANIAN DELEGATION.

12. IN THE MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, WALDHEIM BEGAN BY STATING THAT HE DID NOT COME AS A MEDIATOR. HE WANTED TO LEARN THE VIEWS OF THE PARTIES AND TO REPORT HIS IMPRESSIONS. HE FELT THAT ALL THE PARTIES AGREED THAT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE SHOULD BE RECONVENED, BUT THEY DO NOT AGREE ON THE CONDITIONS FOR THE RESUMED TALKS. IN HIS VIEW, THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK IS PLO PARTICIPATION. THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS ARE LESS INTERESTED IN PROCEDURAL ASPECTS THAN IN THE ACTUAL NEGOTIATING PROCESS. THEY ALL EXPRESS THE VIEW THAT IF THE OPPORTUNITY IS MISSED, THERE COULD BE A RESURGENCE OF RADICAL ELEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE AREA.

13. WALDHEIM DESCRIBED AGAIN HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE VIEWS HELD IN VARIOUS ARAB CAPITALS. HE ELABORATED SOMEWHAT ON JORDANIAN THINKING SAYING THEY HAD TOLD HIM THAT WHILE THEY WOULD ATTEND THE CONFERENCE AS A CONFRONTATION STATE, THE PLO HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINIAN IDENTITY. THE JORDANIANS SAID THAT THEY ARE READY TO COOPERATE IN FINDING A CONSTITUTIONAL

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CONNECTION AND OTHER LINKS WITH A PALESTINIAN STATE. THEY EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION AND CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND THE CONTINUED ESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES. HE ALSO REPEATED ARAFAT'S STATEMENT THAT WHILE THE PLO MUST BE INVITED TO THE CONFERENCE, IT WILL PROBABLY NOT PARTICIPATE, AT LEAST NOT BEFORE THE NEGOTIATIONS REACH THE SUBSTANTIVE STAGE. ARAFAT STATED FLATLY THAT THE PLO OBJECTIVE WAS NOT TO DESTROY ISRAEL.

14. RABIN RESPONDED BY AGREEING THAT THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR RECONVENING THE CONFERENCE. HE SAW THE 1973 CONFERENCE, UNDER WHICH THREE AGREEMENTS WITH EGYPT AND SYRIA WERE SIGNED, AS THE PROPER FRAMEOWRK. ISRAEL WAS THUS PREPARED TO RESUME THE CONFERENCE IMMEDIATELY ON THE BASIS OF EXISTING PROCEDURES AND THE ORIGINAL PARTICIPANTS.

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION GENEVA

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15. RABIN SAID THAT THERE WERE VARIOUS WAYS OF CONDUCTING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND HE THOUGHT THAT THE FORMAT SHOULD BE DECIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TYPE OF AGREEMENT THE PARTICIPANTS WANT TO ACHIEVE. HE WARNED THAT ARAB THREATS OF DOING THIS OR THAT, UNLESS CERTAIN THINGS HAPPEN, WOULD BRING NEGATIVE RESULTS. THE ARABS ARE IN FACT NOW ATTEMPTING TO GO BACK ON THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN SETTING UP THE 1973 CONFERENCE. IF THE ARABS REFUSE TO RESUME THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE BASIS OF THE ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES AND PARTICIPANTS, THEN THEY WILL HAVE TO BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BLOCKING THE RESUMPTION OF THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IN GENEVA. ISRAEL WILL NOT ACCEPT PLO PARTICIPATION, NOR WILL IT AGREE TO A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION. EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT NO NEGOTIATION CAN SUCCEED UNLESS IT IS CONDUCTED BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES ON A BILATERAL BASIS.

16. WALDHEIM RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING  
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WORKING GROUPS, AFTER A FORMAL OPENING, TO DEAL WITH SUBJECTS SUCH AS SINAI, THE GOLAN AND THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. HE THOUGHT THAT THE U.S. COULD BE HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD AND THERE WAS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME WORK BEING DONE UNDER UN AUSPICES. HE SAID THAT THE ARABS HAD ALSO MENTIONED THE WORKING GROUP APPROACH BUT THEY WANT THE WORKING GROUPS TO DEAL WITH FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS SUCH AS NATIONAL BORDERS. RABIN REPLIED THAT IT IS ISRAEL'S INTENTION TO NEGOTIATE WITH EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN ABOUT PEACE, NOT ABOUT SINAI, GOLAN, ETC. THOSE ISSUES COULD BE RESOLVED WITHIN THE PEACE PROCESS. HE REITERATED THAT WHAT SHOULD BE ACHIEVED IS PEACE, NOT JUST WITHDRAWAL. THE NEGOTIATIONS CANNOT SUCCEED UNLESS PEACE IS DEFINED AS ITS MAIN AND POLITICAL OBJECTIVE. IF THIS IS DONE, THE OTHER ASPECTS WILL FALL INTO PLACE.

17. WALDHEIM SAID THAT THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE ARABS IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, PROBABLY WITH SOME LINK TO JORDAN. RABIN SAID THAT HE WISHED TO REPEAT THAT IN ISRAEL'S VIEW THE MAIN PROBLEM IS TO DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND DECIDE WHO WILL PARTICIPATE. ISRAEL WANTS TO NEGOTIATE FOR PEACE ON THE BASIS OF RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. IT DOES NOT ACCEPT THE IDEA OF A PALESTINIAN STATE AND IRMLY BELIEVES THAT THE PALESTINE PROBLEM CAN BE DEALT WITH IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN.

18. WALDHEIM THEN SAID THAT HE FRANKLY COULD NOT SEE HOW ONE COULD BRIDGE THE GAP ON THE PROCEDURAL QUESTION AT THIS TIME. CONSULTATIONS, HOWEVER, MUST BE CONTINUED

AND HE HOPED THAT SECRETARY VANCE COULD CONTINUE THE PROCESS. THE PRESENT EFFORT TO RECONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE MUST NOT BE PERMITTED TO DIE OUT.

19. IF THE LATTER OCCURRED, RABIN REPLIED, THE RESPONSIBILITY WOULD REST SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE WHO HAD  
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CHANGED THEIR POSITION SINCE 1973. EGYPT IS OBLIGED BY ITS INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL TO SEEK ANOTHER NEGOTIATION WITH PEACE AS ITS OBJECTIVE. WALDHEIM THEN ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF EGYPT CALLED FOR A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS UNDER ITS AUSPICES AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR GENEVA. RABIN REPLIED THAT WE MUST NOT PERMIT EGYPT TO SHIRK ITS RESPONSIBILITY AND SABOTAGE THE RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS A CONTINUING PROCESS AND HAD ALREADY PRODUCED THREE AGREEMENTS. MINISTER PERES INTERVENED AT THIS POINT TO SAY THAT SINCE THERE APPEARS TO BE TOTAL DISAGREEMENT REGARDING PLO PARTICIPATION, IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT THIS ISSUE SHOULD NOT BE DEALT WITH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFERENCE BUT ONLY AT A LATER STAGE.

20. IN WINDING UP THE DISCUSSION, RABIN THANKED WALDHEIM FOR COMING TO ISRAEL DURING HIS MID-EAST TRIP. HE CONCLUDED BY PRAISING THE WORK OF UNEF AND SAID THAT IT IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE POSITIVE ROLE THAT THE UN CAN PLAY, AFTER AN AGREEMENT IS REACHED BETWEEN THE PARTIES CONCERNED.

21. COMMENT: THE TALKS WERE CORRECT AND BUSINESS-LIKE, IF NOT WARM. THE ISRAELIS, WHO HAVE NO LOVE FOR EITHER WALDHEIM OR THE UN, MAINTAIN THAT HIS REPORT ON TALKS WITH ARAB LEADERS WAS INTERESTING BUT CONTAINED NOTHING NEW. WHEN ASKED FOR HIS OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THE VISIT, EVRON TOLD US THAT WHILE NO APPARENT PROGRESS WAS MADE TOWARD RECONVENING THE GENEVA TALKS, THE VISIT HAD AT LEAST RESULTED IN WALDHEIM GETTING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISRAELI POINT OF VIEW. AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT OF THE VISIT WAS WALDHEIM'S USE OF JERUSALEM'S ATAROT AIRPORT, WHICH IS ON THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK. IT DID NOT COME UP IN THE MEETINGS ALTHOUGH ISRAELI MEDIA NEVER FAILED TO MENTION IT WHEN REPORTING ON THE VISIT. EVRON REFERRED TO IT WHEN BRIEFING US AND  
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SAID THAT THE JORDANIANS OBVIOUSLY KNEW, AND APPARENTLY  
DID NOT OBJECT, SINCE THEY APPROVED THE FLIGHT PLAN FROM  
AMMAN DIRECT TO ATAROT.  
DUNNIGAN

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